

F 99

.R46

1803

[Faint handwritten notes, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.]



REPUBLICAN ADDRESS

To the Free Men of Connecticut.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

THE GENERAL COMMITTEE of the REPUBLICANS of CONNECTICUT solicit your candid attention to the political dissensions which at present agitate this state, a subject highly interesting to every man who loves peace and liberty.

On this subject you have been addressed by a number of federalists, convened at Hartford on the 31st of May last.

We would deem it a misapplication of time and a departure from the true dignity of serious discussion, to notice what is exceptionable in that address, for our object is not to prove that the address is deficient in candour and truth, but to prove that the mass of citizens, of all parties, have an inestimable common interest, in the protection of which it behoves them to unite; and to prove also, that federalism is a dereliction of that common interest, a base betraying of it into the hands of its enemies. We speak here of the federalism of leaders; for we know full well that the federalism of those who lead is one thing, and that of those who follow is another, and a very different thing.

The federalists, in their address, observe, that the origin of the dissensions which disturb the tranquility of this state, is "so well known that it cannot be necessary at this time to examine or explain it." We think otherwise. We believe that the great body of citizens, of both political parties, have the same interests, the same principles, and the same general views, with regard to the means of promoting their prosperity, and of protecting their liberty. We believe therefore, that so far as dissensions do prevail, they must be the offspring of misinformation, of mistake; and that, to put an end to those dissensions among that mass of citizens who have no private views, no particular interests hostile to the common weal, nothing more is necessary than a true, a full understanding of the origin of those dissensions.

Are the real interests of that class of our fellow citizens who are styled federal hostile to or different from the interests of republicans? Has nature, or has accident adapted one kind of happiness to one political sect, and a different kind of happiness to a different sect? An opinion like this is as absurd as dangerous; for however the arts of plausible ambition, of skillful wickedness, by exciting and misguiding the zeal of uninformed and unsuspecting integrity, may have been able to array citizen against citizen, neighbor against neighbor, and to plant distrust and hatred where confidence and friendship ought to grow, still it will remain an unchangeable truth, that republicans and federalists must be freemen or slaves, happy or wretched, together.

Far then from us be rancour and every passion, while we make to our fellow citizens a candid exposition of our view of the origin of the dissensions that now exist in this state, of those essential principles of government, in which the theories of leading federalists differ from those of the republicans, and of the opposing systems of public measures advocated and pursued by the parties respectively. If in the course of this exposition we

shall find ourselves under the necessity of animadverting with severity on the conduct and views of men opposed to us, let it not be said that we have violated the rule we have prescribed to ourselves, that we permit passion to make us unjust ! No, we will endeavor to be strictly just, and as we will set down nought in malice, so we will extenuate nothing. We will speak to our fellow citizens with that plainness which belongs to truth. In an honest and ardent pursuit of those inestimable objects, public peace and liberty, we will not pause to calculate the importance to ourselves individually of the love or the hatred of the enemies of public peace and liberty.

History teaches us this interesting fact, that from the remotest ages a few men in every nation have had the address to make the multitude their property, that the only intelligible distinctions that have been known among men have been those of master and slave ; that the dark annals of despotism have been interrupted and enlightened by some gleams of liberty, by some noble struggles of oppressed man to break his chains, and to assume that dignified station from which he had long been degraded ; that the success of these struggles has ever been of short duration ; that though man has been found invincible when struggling for his liberty, yet that he has never been found competent to its protection ; but that ambition and cunning have always succeeded, sooner or later, in persuading the simple, unsuspecting sons of freedom to assist in riveting their chains anew ; that those short periods of liberty have indeed exhibited illustrious samples of genius, of energy and of virtue, to which degraded and enslaved man can never attain ; but that in the long, dark night of despotism, these, like the bright coruscations of a meteor, have only served to give a more forcible perception of the deep gloom that was spread over the world.

From these facts, which are controverted by none, men have deduced various theories, conformed to their various wishes.—The lovers of liberty, the true friends of man have, in every case, seen freedom subverted by circumstances peculiar to each respective experiment. They have seen nothing to discourage new experiments. They perceive in the progress that society has made and is still making in knowledge, in every intellectual improvement, a sure a certain presage of the future universal triumph of truth and of liberty. On the contrary, the enemies of liberty, men of uncontrolable ambition and cupidity, say, that the experience of past ages demonstrates that the mass of mankind in every nation are, and, from the very nature of man, must forever remain incompetent to protect and perpetuate their liberties when acquired ; that their ignorance and their vices incapacitate them for self government—that the ignorant multitude are destined forever to be governed by the discerning few, whatever may be the form of that government—and that therefore all that is to be sought, or hoped, from the institution of society is, that they may be so contrived as to mitigate, and render as mild as possible, that vassalage to which, they say, God has, by an irreverfable decree, destined the human race. False ! Foolish ! Impious theory ! They seek to deprive their fellow-men of their dearest rights, of all that gives value to life.

of all that gives to man a valuable pre-eminence above the brutes, and justify themselves by the most cruel, the most degrading of calumnies; by asserting in short, that the Divinity has given to man no valuable pre-eminence above the brutes.

Happy would it have been for us if this monstrous theory had been confined to that country which gave it birth. In Europe, as the multitude have been compelled to perform the part of beasts of burden, there it seems almost innocent to speak of them as such. Here in America, one would have thought that discretion, if not a sense of justice, might have protected us from the insult. But inordinate ambition is the growth of all countries, and in all countries it justifies its depredations by similar pretexts.

No sooner was that war finished which severed these American States from the British empire, than ambition marked them for her own, and commenced her secret machinations. We will pass in silence the few years that preceded the birth of our present federal constitution, because during that period the operations of faction were unorganized and desultory; but no sooner was a convention of the States proposed in order to revise the federal compact than they became both systematic and active. You need not be told fellow-citizens, that at this period, and for the avowed purpose of influencing the deliberations of the proposed convention, Mr. Adams, our late President, wrote three volumes on the subject of government, the whole scope and object of which writings was to prove that a government constituted precisely on the principles of that of Great Britain, and no other, is perfectly adapted to the happiness and protection of men in all countries, and in all stages of society—and that as far as those who were to form a government for us should deviate from the true principles of the British government, so far would they deviate from wisdom and from nature.

The convention when assembled was found to consist of discordant materials, some ardent friends of the elective principle throughout the legislative and executive departments of the government, some open, some covert friends of the hereditary principle in the executive, and in one branch of the legislative departments. Here it was that Alexander Hamilton strenuously advocated an annihilation of the state governments, an executive and senate elected for life. How easy! how very natural would be the transition from Hamilton's governor and senate, or to use European names, King and Nobles for life, to Adams' hereditary king and nobles! The constitution, when formed, was declared by the convention that formed it, to be "the result of a spirit of mutual concession." Probably no single member of the convention believed it to be free from defects. In one point all parties agreed, to wit, that a stronger bond of union than had hitherto bound the states together was absolutely necessary to their peace, to their safety, perhaps to their very existence. The republicans were in general well pleased with the constitution. They confided in the good sense of the people, and they believed that if what appeared to them imperfections should on experiment be found to be really such, they would in the manner provided by the instrument itself be cor-

F99
816
1803

rected. Some indeed, not less honest, not less zealous for a firm union of the states, but more jealous than their brethren, thought they saw in the instrument unnecessary facilities to corruption and usurpation, and on that account ultimately opposed its adoption. This procured for them, and for the republican party, with which they in the subsequent struggles co-operated, and to which they in truth belonged, the name of antifederalists.

It must be manifest to every reflecting mind, that men, who, like Mr. Adams, believed the British to be the standard of good governments, must have regarded our federal constitution as it came from the hands of the convention with disapprobation and contempt. Annihilation of the state governments, and a combination of the states under one government must have been a necessary part of the plan of the monarchists, and accordingly, as has already been observed, the measure was brought forward in the convention by Mr. Hamilton. Notwithstanding this attempt was defeated, and although the constitution was destitute of almost every thing which the monarchists considered as valuable in substance, yet they unanimously subscribed it; because it was all that at that time could be obtained, because though deficient in substance, in form it was correct; and because they hoped that, as it had the form, they should be able by a skillful management of its powers, by an artful direction and management of private interests already within its reach, and of such as from time to time it would be possible under various pretexts to create, they should be able to give it the substance of their great model, the British government.

The moment that the new government was organized, the monarchists, arrogating to themselves the name of federalists, commenced a systematic attack on every republican principle in the constitution, endeavoring to sap one after another, every bulwark erected for the protection of the independence of the state governments, and of the supremacy of the whole people. This attack called forth a correspondent vigilance and vigor on the part of the republicans in the defence of every thing which in a government they considered of value. Thus a warfare of principles commenced which has not yet subsided.

Here then, fellow-citizens, you have a faithful exhibition of our view of the origin of the dissensions which disturb the tranquility not only of this state, but of the United States, and of those essential principles of government in which the theories of leading federalists differ from those of republicans. We will say something of the opposing systems of public measures advocated and pursued by the parties respectively. Permit us, however, to pause here and make a remark which is suggested by what has already been said. Man is always backward to acknowledge himself in an error, he is too apt to consider it a dishonor to him to have been deceived, this induces him to persevere in his error until he meets with evidence altogether irresistible. Many an honest sincere republican has constantly given his voice for federalists, believing them to be as honestly and as sincerely republican as himself. Such men will not easily be persuaded that they have been betrayed by those in whom they have confided; that they have given their support to a system which is their abhorrence.

It will be difficult to convince such republicans, that their friends, the leading federalists with whom they are acquainted, can be advocates for the systems of Mr. Adams or Mr. Hamilton. We solicit those men who shall entertain doubts like these, to reflect that Mr. Adams' books were published for the express purpose that has already been stated, and were read by the leading men of both parties; his principles were, therefore, early and universally understood—that Hamilton's proposition for the destruction of the state governments, and for the election of a chief magistrate and senators *for life*, was made in the face of the convention assembled from every part of the union. To suppose then that the opinions of these men are unknown to leading federalists would be mere idiocy. Both Mr. Adams and Hamilton are known by leading federalists to be monarchists in principle, and of course to be enemies to our federal constitution. Mr. Adams has, on account of his principles been raised to the chief magistracy, and Mr. Hamilton is, to this day, the favorite chief of his party. Would republicans, would those who detest kingly, or any other hereditary governments, exalt to the chief magistracy of a government like ours, an avowed royalist? Such conduct would be the wildest phrenzy. No, *the men, who in fact procured the election of Mr. Adams were royalists. The men who are now the political friends of Mr. Hamilton are royalists.*

Though the royalists, or federalists, as they called themselves, commenced their operations with the commencement of the government, yet during the administration of Washington their march though steady was cautious. That inflexible patriot, always esteemed by the republicans, was always hated by the federalists, because he was known to be in favor of the popular elective system. They knew his integrity to be uncorruptible, to him, therefore, it is not probable that their projects were explained, and his personal friendship for, and confidence in some of the party whom either accident or design had placed near him, enabled them, in some instances to circumvent him, to betray him into measures plausible indeed, but which in their tendencies were indisputably opposite to the whole tenor of his declarations, and to the principles he avowed. Such instances however were rare, for we do not accuse him of a mental approbation of anti-republican legislative measures, merely because he did not consider it expedient to oppose to them his constitutional veto.

The day when this Great Man retired from the government was for federalism a day of triumph. Having by their address, for we will make use of a mild epithet, procured for themselves a chief on whose co-operation they might rely, they seemed determined to redeem the time they had lost under his predecessor. Having obtained a distinct majority in the legislature, having early seized on the judiciary, they were become complete masters of the field. All the powers of the government were in their hands, and they were all exerted to prostrate every obstacle to the establishment of their favorite system. Caution was at an end, henceforward their attacks on the constitution, our citadel of liberty, were open, incessant, alarming. To trace

them in all their movements of hostility, would be to write a history of the measures of the government. Few indeed were the measures that did not either directly or indirectly tend to advance this great plan of federalism ; but whatever might be the mode in which they were to operate, one distinguishing principle pervades the whole, they are all, excepting their measures of terror, calculated to create and to extend an individual, a particular interest, separate and distinct from the general interest of the community, and to engraft that particular interest on their system in such a manner as that it should be understood that they were to stand or fall together.

The limits of an address will admit of little more than to name the most prominent of the measures that were directed against the popular, the republican system, in short, against liberty. In the front rank appears the funding system, a measure manifestly unjust, in as much as the real creditor of the public was thereby compelled to contribute to pay the whole amount of the very debt, which in reason and justice was still due to himself, to the gambling speculator, who, taking advantage of his necessities, had purchased the paper on which was recorded the evidence of that debt, at one eighth part of the amount of the debt. The injustice of the act will be forgotten. The soldier to whom we were indebted for our liberty, he who had purchased it for us at the price of his health, and of his blood, he, it is true, has been deprived of the pittance that had been promised him, and the price of his blood has been paid to his proud oppressor ; but the soldier is poor, and himself and his injuries are forgotten ; but the effects of the measure on the politics of our country will long be remembered.

The debts of the United States, at the time they were funded, were nearly as follows :—The whole debt due originally to foreigners, about twelve millions of dollars. The domestic debt due originally to our own citizens of various descriptions, forty millions of dollars, but worth at the market price not more than five ; but let it be estimated at thirteen millions of dollars. The debts of the several states for which the creditors had no pretence of claim against the United States, and which, therefore, should not be included in the estimate of the debts, really due from the United States, but which were assumed by the United States on shallow and frivolous pretences, amounted to the very serious sum of eighteen millions of dollars. If we estimate the balances due to those states which had performed more than their proportion in our revolutionary labors, at five millions of dollars which cannot be far from the truth, it will be found that the whole debt of the United States at the time the law for funding it was enacted, in truth and in justice, amounted to no more than thirty millions of dollars, at least no more than that sum was due to those who by that law were recognized as creditors. But the debt when funded amounted to eighty millions of dollars. By this single operation then a capital to the enormous amount of fifty millions of dollars was created out of nothing, and what was worse, if worse could be than the injustice of the measure, the proprietors of this vast wealth understood that they owed it to federalism, (for the

measure had been strenuously opposed by the republicans) and they were taught to believe that the existence of their wealth depended on the success of that system which had created it.

Thus the federal leaders in one day, and by a single manœuvre, enlisted under their banners, not indeed an army of poor soldiers, dressed in uniform, with muskets in their hands, prepared blindly to perform the work of desolation and murder ; but an army much more to be dreaded of rich and consequently of influential men, dispersed over the union, who owed all their wealth and all their influence to their chiefs, and stood pledged blindly to support them in all their attacks on the principles of liberty.

While these things were achieving by the legislature on one quarter, on another the judiciary were making a bold and decisive assault. A suit had been commenced against one of the states, and the supreme court of the United States solemnly decided that an independent state was subject to be impleaded before them, and amenable to their orders, and liable of course to be punished for contempt, or to have execution awarded against them. This was a situation for sovereignty which was universally felt to be rather ludicrous. It was doubtless a noble stride towards the accomplishment of Mr. Hamilton's project of annihilating the state governments. Unfortunately for federalism the state sovereignties did not choose to be put on a footing with a corporation for the support of a toll bridge ; they were not yet sufficiently federal for that ; they therefore united in a constitutional provision to check this inroad of the judiciary.

The struggles of the French nation to recover its long lost rights, excited the sympathy of the friends of liberty in this country ; on the contrary, they were objects of regret and terror to the federalists. The French revolution became overclouded ; it was disgraced by violence and cruelty ; it was stained with innocent blood. The republicans in America, who cherished the pure and just principles of liberty only, have been to this day accused of abetting all the horrible deeds of the men who in France disgraced the name of liberty, a most foul calumny, and known to be such by those who uttered it. Nay, liberty itself was stigmatized. The horrors of the French revolution were said to be the certain fruits of democracy, that is, of a government entirely under the control of the people.

To enable federalists to accomplish in our government the revolution which they meditated, it was necessary to increase as fast as possible the number of influential men who should be interested in the support of their measures. To degrade and to bring into contempt republican principles, and as, after all, they could not hope that an actual change in our government to the monarchical, hereditary form, would be permitted without opposition, an army was indispensable to overwhelm resistance.— This is the key that unlocks, and places fairly before our eyes, all their secret councils ; by this we are enabled to discern the consistency of all their measures. It was to accomplish this revolution that the funding system was projected and carried into effect ; that the sovereignty of the states was attacked ; that the

public money has been wasted with a profusion bordering on madness; that we have engaged in the intrigues of foreign countries, in them to find a pretext for war, for armies, for fleets, for an increase of expence, for new taxes, for loans of money at an unheard of rate of interest.

These were the measures of federalism, and by them its interests were advanced precisely in proportion to the increase of the public burthens. We have seen hosts of public creditors, of tax-gatherers, of officers, civil and military, all sold to the cause of federalism, pledged to the overthrow of republicanism. We have seen the plainest, the most estimable of the rights of man held up to public scorn in publications favored and supported by the officers of the government and their adherents. Foreigners have been encouraged to erect presses in the midst of a republican people, for the purpose of ridiculing and execrating every principle of republicanism, and the American presses were most of them corrupted and perverted to the same abominable purpose. If a printer was found honest enough to resist seduction and bribes, and bold enough to warn the people of their danger, cruel, arbitrary and unconstitutional laws were enacted, under colour of which he was seized, stripped of his property, and condemned to languish in prison.

Against the men who remained faithful to the cause of liberty, and whose talents made them objects of dread to the federalists, a mode of warfare cruel and base beyond example was adopted. In order to destroy their influence with their fellow citizens and to deprive them of the power of making a successful opposition to federalism, calumnies without number, and of matchless atrocity, were invented and circulated with a diligence that demonstrated it to be the effect of concert. To them all without exception was imputed every wickedness that has been known to blacken the heart of man; they were spoken of not as men, but as demons: a great effort was made to overwhelm them with insanity, to set a mark in their forehead, and to drive them from the face and society of men. In some parts of the union, and particularly in this state, the attempt was attended with too much success. Here the republican, though his life were without blemish, found himself at once stripped of reputation and the esteem of men, and he was compelled with pain to remark a majority of that very people whose advocate and defender he was, uniting with his and their enemies in their attempts to degrade and destroy him. This was indeed and in truth *the reign of terror*.

Federalism was every where triumphant; its insolence was accordingly unbounded. The avaricious and the ambitious, the men of splendid fortunes, and of splendid talents, those in short who, under the new order of things, were to be nobles and masters, were, with few exceptions, especially in the northern states, united in one firm, powerful phalanx, under its banners. The people were found incapable of, or indisposed to resistance. They either cowered down through fear, or they joined the enemies of their liberties, applauded the measures calculated to enthrall them. The firm and intrepid republicans were excluded from all participation in the general or state go-

governments—they were every where traduced, proscribed, persecuted. In short, the fair fabric of our freedom, whose walls were cemented by the best blood of our nation—that asylum, that last hope of the oppressed race of man, seemed ready to fall in ruins.

To obtain these, the federalists, with much art, fomented a quarrel with the French nation, had succeeded so far as to produce an open rupture; and under the pretext of danger of an invasion, which every man in the country of common sense and of common information knew to be impossible, they procured an army to be placed at their disposal—war, to draw the attention of the people from domestic to foreign danger—and an army to execute whatever should be commanded, seemed all that was wanting, and these were absolutely indispensable, in order to open the last scene of the drama, in order to exhibit the bloody catastrophe. This was to men of virtue and intelligence a moment of awful expectation, of deep, of unspeakable anxiety. They knew that our destinies were proceeding rapidly to a crisis, that we were playing for the last stake left to the human race, and that the game was nearly ended. The moment was at hand that was to decide the question, whether man was ever to emerge from the state of depression and vassalage in which, from the beginning of time, he had been cruelly held, or was to be sunk again, without future hope, into the dark abyss. The profusion with which the public money was squandered, and which could not be concealed from the public eye, the burthens that rapidly accumulated on the people, the land tax, and the loan of money at an unexampled interest, to supply that profusion; an army, always an object of jealousy to freemen, and in this instance raised on pretexts obviously insincere, and which rendered its destination suspicious,—these things excited in the public mind distrust and enquiry.—This was a happy presage.—The enlightend patriots hoped that the slumber of the people was nearly at an end—that they would soon awake.—Thank heaven, they did awake, and the proud edifice of federalism, that castle of despair, was laid smoking in the dust.——

A single circumstance, fellow citizens, which preceded the downfall of federalism, and which was considered at the time, by the intelligent men of both parties, as the harbinger of that event, we will recal to your recollections, principally because, in our opinions, it demonstrates the truth of what we have taken for granted, that the war was considered as necessary to the accomplishment of federal projects on our own government, and that the army was raised, not to repel French invasion, but to crush republicanism. The French government were inviting ours to meet them on honorable terms for the purpose of endeavoring to put an end, by treaty, to all subsisting differences; Mr. Adams called a council of those federalists in whom he placed most confidence, in order to determine whether the invitation should be accepted or rejected. It is well known that the council were divided in opinion; that some, alarmed at the symptoms of a gathering storm at home, and too timid to embark in an enterprize so hazardous as that of attempting to stifle

and overwhelm the public voice by force, were for peace, and for waiting for a more auspicious time for the accomplishment of their plans ;—that others more daring were for rejecting all overtures from France, and boldly meeting the shock of conflicting principles at home ; they knew that if ambassadors were appointed peace would be the consequence, for America and France had no hostile, no conflicting interests ; that the necessary consequence of peace must be a dissolution of the army ;—in short, that it would be relinquishing the ground they had gained. Why should they fly on the first appearance of those whom they expected to meet and whom they were prepared to encounter, especially as henceforward it was probable that the strength of that enemy would be augmenting whilst theirs would be diminishing ?

Revolutions are never accomplished without hazard. The boldest measures are commonly the most successful. Why then should they wait for a more favorable time which probably would never arrive ? To relinquish the war with France at this juncture would be a cowardly desertion of their cause at the moment when one vigorous exertion would probably secure its triumph. These were the counsels of some of the leading federalists present, among whom it is said were Hamilton and Pickering. Do these things appear incredible to you, fellow citizens ? Perhaps you do not know that when the army was voted, it was the advice of Mr. Hamilton that it should amount to fifty thousand men. Perhaps you have forgotten that an army of volunteers was enlisted in every part of the Union, the officers of which were appointed by the executive of the United States, and was placed at the disposal of the President. Perhaps you have never heard that the Secretary at war Mr. McHenry expressly recommended it to officers of that army of volunteers to encourage the enlistment *of that class of men called old Tories*. And yet these things are true, and they deserve your solemn consideration. In the council however caution prevailed ; ambassadors were nominated, and you cannot have forgotten that moment Mr. Adams was execrated by almost every leading federalist, as the base cowardly betrayer of their cause. Yet to relieve the nation from the distress of a war existing without cause, and without object, was to betray federalism.

The period for electing a President of the United States was approaching, the federalists were disgusted with Mr. Adams, but dared not change their ground in the face of a formidable enemy, they determined therefore once more to adhere to him. The republican spirit became roused and active. In the state of New-York the period for electing the members of their legislature, which was to appoint the electors of the future President, arrived. So nearly were the parties now balanced in the union, that it was calculated the state of New-York would probably turn the scale ; it was also reduced nearly to a certainty that party would preponderate in the legislature of that state which should carry the elections in the city of New-York. To that city every eye was anxiously turned. The republicans succeeded, and from that moment the federal cause was despaired of, though its efforts were not yet at an end. As soon as

it was fairly determined that the republicans had gained a majority in the legislature of New-York, the federalists in Congress passed a bill for disbanding their army, now become useless. Here let it be remembered, fellow citizens, that the state of our affairs with France were at this time precisely in the situation they were at the time when the army was raised ; for so far was the controversy from being adjusted, that our ambassadors had not in fact reached the French territory——But the prospect of employing the army in the service, for which it was raised, vanished, and to deprive the republicans of the credit of disbanding it was all that remained in the power of federalism to perform.

These were the projects and these the deeds of federalism in the days of its power ;——Of its measures in its state of depression, of those of the republicans since they gained the ascendancy, we will draw a rapid sketch ;——the uniformity of the scene precludes a lengthy description.

To correct the disorders in our government occasioned by federal misrule, was the first labor of republicans. They reduced the army and navy to the standard of our real wants ; they abolished a number of vexatious, oppressive, and unnecessary taxes, and by that means disbanded a host of tax-gatherers, who were supported at the public expence ; they introduced the most rigorous economy into every department of public expenditure. Though they are still convinced that the public debt was funded on terms flagrantly unjust, yet as the faith of the nation was pledged by those who had a right to pledge it on those terms, and as a great proportion of the debt is now in the hands of men who were not parties to the injustice,—equity, policy, every good principle demands a rigorous, a punctual payment of the debt, on the terms on which it was funded ; they have accordingly, by rescinding every unnecessary expence, and by introducing a new degree of order and accuracy into the department of finance, been able to provide for the regular and rapid discharge of the debt ; and there is no reason to doubt that, with the administration of our affairs in such hands, a few years will relieve the people from every pecuniary burden, excepting the light and necessary one of supporting the current expences of government.

The state of our affairs, when we consider that many burthensome taxes have been abolished, is so far beyond what the most sanguine republican hoped, and what any federalist would allow to be possible, that to the deluded of that party it may appear more like the effect of magic than of simple frugality, justice and order. Abroad our national character is as much improved as the state of our affairs at home. It is now understood by the nations of Europe that our government is determined to stand aloof from all their cabals and contests, that while it devotes itself to the protection and prosperity of its own citizens, it will with justice, sincerity and impartiality cultivate the friendship of all nations. Abroad our government is universally respected for its wisdom, and esteemed for its justice.—This is no exaggeration.

Where is the nation that has a complaint against us ? Where the government that does not speak of ours with respect ? But

remember, fellow citizens, that every measure that has conducted to this happy and honorable state of things has been opposed by the whole force of every leading federalist. They had predicted that debility, disorder, a prostration of public credit, expunging the public debt, anarchy, civil war, and a consequent despotism, would be the fruits of a republican system when reduced to practice.—Their predictions they had never themselves believed ; but that their falsehood should be detected by the people was what they could illy brook. They foresaw that if the wise, just, and economical plans of the republicans should be carried into effect, the people, feeling the benefits of those measures, would be convinced of the folly, oppression, and profligacy of federalism. Their opposition was unavailing, their rage was unbounded, but it was harmless ;——The work of reformation proceeded with calmness and dignity.—The people were made happy, and they felt and acknowledged that they were so.

The federalists had awaked from their dream of glory ; their king and their nobility had passed away ; but the resentment the rage of disappointment remained. They could no longer, hope to govern, but they might thwart and embarrass their adversaries, and this was some consolation. War is the most terrible scourge with which mankind can be afflicted ; it is peculiarly to be deprecated by a republican government, as it has a powerful, an irresistible tendency to demoralize the people, to corrupt and undermine their principles of justice and equality, and their habits of order and economy, without which a republican government cannot exist. War then was to be desired by the federalists, because it might so far destroy the republican principles and habits among the people, as to give ultimate success to the hereditary system ; and because, at any rate, when the people should become restless and discontented under the burthens and miseries of war, as they certainly would, whatever might be its cause, all those burthens, and all those miseries, the people might by artifice and misrepresentation, be induced to impute to the wickedness, or at best to the folly of their rulers, and of course once more to bring those who were opposed to them, who were in the habit of imputing to them knavery and folly, into power. It is on principles like these that the federalists have been found supporting, under the present administration those measures only that have provided for an increase of our military or naval establishment.

It was from motives like these that, taking advantage of an act of injustice of a Spanish officer at New-Orleans, which affected in a high degree the interests of the inhabitants of the countries watered by the Ohio and Mississippi, and of the strong resentment excited by that injustice, they united their utmost exertions to hurry us into a war with France and Spain. The republicans, though determined at all events to have the injury corrected, preferred, nay the very people who were suffering the injury preferred negotiation to war, knowing that in case negotiation should fail, the evils of war would be borne with the more patience, as it would be known that they could not have been avoided. The project of negotiating was treated by all

the federalists as base, cowardly, and degrading to our national character. They said it demonstrated the extreme pusillanimity of our chief magistrate; that it was a sample of what we were to expect from his administration; that the absurdity of the plan was equal to its meanness, for that from the very nature of things, it was demonstrable to any man of common understanding that it could not possibly succeed. Negotiation however was tried—its success you know. It secures to us interests of inestimable value, it removes far from us the most probable source of future wars; and it opens a prospect of future wealth and power almost exceeding calculation;—And yet this treaty, whose benefits are above all price, is, and will continue to be decried, and calumniated by a faction, who have lost the hope, who have almost lost the wish, of accomplishing any thing beyond mere gratuitous mischief.

This single transaction, fellow citizens, forces on the mind conviction relative to the views of federalists more clearly, more irresistibly, than could be done by volumes of argument. That they strove to plunge the country into a war, of which no man could seriously pretend to foretell the duration or the result, is certain; that their motive was not what they pretend^d, a regard to the interests of the western people, is also certain, for those people were willing and desirous to wait the result of negotiation; and besides it is a fact well known, that our northern federalists universally hold these people in detestation—for the truth of this assertion we appeal to you, fellow citizens. What then was their motive? It was no other, it could be no other, than the gratification of personal ambition, or party hatred. To these objects then, the men to whom you have confided your highest interests, your property, your peace, your liberties, have attempted to sacrifice those high interests——These are the men who demand a continuation of your confidence!!!—These are the men who declare, that opposition to them is hostility to order, to morals, to religion, in short, is rank Jacobinism!!

Of the morals of men who have basely betrayed the trust that has been reposed in them, by attempting to erect a monarchical, aristocratic tyranny on the ruins of liberty, and being defeated in that flagitious attempt, have strove to bring war and ruin on their country for the gratification of the most malignant, the worst of passions, we will say nothing; but to their religion! yes to the religion of federalism, as it has been a word of magic potency, we will pay one moment's attention.

Until the accession of Mr. Adams to the Presidency, it will be remembered, that the infidelity of republicans, or the peculiar piety of federalists, had never been heard of; in truth, as it respects the proportionate numbers of men who avowed, or entertained a speculative disbelief in revelation, the parties stood on nearly equal ground; there is, we apprehend, no reason, at any rate, to believe that the number was proportionally greater on the republican side than on the federal; nor can it be pretended that republican christians are less pious, or less sincere, than federal christians; indeed this never was the ground of the distinction.

The influence of the clergy, wherever there is a clergy, over the minds of the people, must from the nature of their profession be very great. All the governments of Europe have found it necessary to purchase this influence en masse, or rather to incorporate it with the other powers of the government, and to admit the clergy to a share, proportioned to their influence, in the common plunder. In England, whose government is the great prototype of American federalism, the share of the clergy is one tenth part of the annual produce of the whole kingdom, besides the dignity and privileges of nobility to a number of the clerical chiefs called Archbishops and Bishops, with many other dignified grades of priesthood.

When the federalists were searching about them on every side for aids and auxiliaries in their great project of establishing monarchy, it would have been marvelous if they overlooked or neglected an ally so obvious and so powerful as the priesthood, especially as it was so prominent a part of the British edifice which they were copying. They were not guilty of this oversight. We do not say, for we do not know that any negotiation was ever entered into on this subject, a perfect understanding might be obtained without it, it is probable therefore, that in form it never took place; but the clergy understood that the federal system was the British system, and that the analogy was intended to extend to the clergy was soon put beyond a doubt. Mr. Adams in his inaugural speech announced his intention of giving countenance to men of religion. This was the first open promulgation of a governmental, a federal religion. Henceforward religion became the shibboleth of the party.

If we were disposed to excite your laughter, fellow-citizens, we have only to name to you men living amongst you, men known to you all, who became suddenly like the priestesses of Delphos, filled with the Divinity, to raving, religion!! Yes this is the religion of which republicans are destitute. Entertaining no projects of oppression against their fellow citizens, but aiming by the simplest plainest means to accomplish their greatest good, they have no need to offer bribes to a priesthood. They are friends to true religion, to real piety, to every principle that has a tendency to increase the virtue and happiness of men. It is only when priests desert the duties of their profession and become the instruments of faction that they meet the reproaches of republicans.

The federalists driven from the government of the United States have hitherto found means to maintain a preponderance in several of the state governments where they still wage a spiteful war against republicanism and its friends. Let us come home to our own State of Connecticut. Will it be denied that at this moment the government of Connecticut is set in hostile array against the existing government of the nation? against that immense majority of men and of states who love and cherish the present administration and the principles on which they act? No, this cannot be denied, for it is a fact of which no man is ignorant. It is true that no man who avows his approbation of the measures of the present administration re-

ceives the countenance of our state government. It is true that republicans are superseded in office merely because they are republicans. It is true that federalists forego no means in their power to keep alive the unreasonable hatreds and jealousies which they have excited against the general government and its friends; and yet these men talk of reconciliation. What do they mean by reconciliation? Will they unite in supporting republican measures, will they renounce their error and do justice to those men and those measures that have saved our country from ruin and placed it in a state of prosperity never before known upon earth? Let them do this, and republicans will be reconciled to them.

Republicanism and federalism can never unite, can never be reconciled, they are liberty and slavery, they are terms of essential opposition. It has been observed of late, that some of the ruling party in Connecticut have assumed a language like this.—We allow that the measures of the general government are wise, that our affairs are conducted better than our fears predicted, What then? Our state government is a totally different thing from the general government—Why do you wish to make a change among the officers of the state government? Our answer is, because many officers of our state government are federalists, or are ignorantly acting the part of federalists—that is, they are enemies of liberty and of the friends of liberty; they are enemies of the general government and of the principles on which it is conducted; they keep the state in a posture of hostility to the federal government, and so long as they have power to prevent it they will never permit a cordial co-operation of the state with the general government.

The question is not, fellow citizens, whether Jonathan Trumbull, or Ephraim Kirdy, or any other man, shall be governor of the state of Connecticut, but whether the state of Connecticut shall be cordially restored to the bosom of that family of which she was once an honorable, a highly esteemed member, or the present alienations be encouraged and increased until they shall arrive to the state of open rupture. The present state of things cannot long exist, it cannot be stationary, and the bickerings between the government of this state and of the United States must end in reconciliation, or they must end in war. What then is the object of those federalists who direct the operations of the party, and who are responsible for all the consequences of their enterprizes? Do they expect to break the republican states down to their measures? No, their folly cannot soar so high. Do they contemplate a dissolution of the union? Dare they look on the consequences of an event like that? If they have ever turned their eyes that way, let them tremble. No, fellow citizens, this is surely an idle fear. We know that you may be, many of you have been deceived with regard to the views and measures of the two great political parties; how long this delusion will continue we know not; but we know that you are in general republicans, attached, as ardently as any men on earth, to a free and frugal government; you cannot therefore be induced to throw away your liberties, to plunge a dagger into your own vitals.

A thousand absurdities have been uttered relative to the plans of the republicans in case they shall obtain a majority in the legislature of this state. Almost all the views of republicans, so far as we know them, we have already explained. Republicans have no projects hostile to religion, its ministers, or its ordinances ; in this respect they hold it to be essentially, and under all circumstances wrong and tyrannical for a government to interpose any further than may be necessary to prevent the violation of the peace of society. They would restore elections to that freedom from personal and pecuniary influence which they formerly enjoyed. To the militia, to all those men who are thought worthy to be intrusted with the defence of liberty, they would extend the right of suffrage, that most important right of freemen. They would divide the state into districts for the election of councillors and of members of Congress. These are the innovations, if such they may be called, which republicans have at heart.

It is not peculiarly our own cause, fellow citizens, that we are pleading, but your own cause, the cause of our common country, the cause of the whole human race, for the whole human race are interested in the result of the experiment now on trial here. We ask of you no implicit faith ; but we request, we beseech you to lay aside prejudice, to examine impartially, and with a sincere desire to discover the truth, whatever may be urged in favor of the projects of either party. Surely we ought to be heard, when we request only that you will with coolness and firmness pursue your own highest happiness—and as liberty has now, on this globe, no abode but with us, that you will not madly combine with her enemies, to drive her from the face of the earth.

Signed by order of the General Committee,

LEVI IVES, Jun. Clerk.

[Aug. 30. 1803]

Republican Nomination for Council.

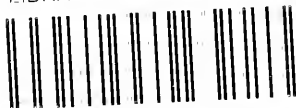
EPHRAIM KIRBY,
WILLIAM HART,
THOMAS SEYMOUR,
JONATHAN BULL,
EBENEZER BARNARD,
RUFUS HITCHCOCK,
ELIJAH MUNSON,
ASA SPALDING,
LATHAM HULL,
FLISHA HYDE,

JABEZ HITCH,
WALTER BRADLEY,
JABEZ H. TOMLINSON,
EBENEZER DEVOTION,
DANIEL TILDEN,
JOHN WELCH,
ELIJAH BOARDMAN,
ISAAC SPENCER, 2d.
JOHN T. PETERS,
SAMUEL WHITEFELSEY



WERT
BOOKBINDING
Grantsville, Pa.
Sept—Oct 1988
We're Open - Reprint

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 110 308 8